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# STORIES ABOUT THE HISTORY OF POE

ALLEN COUNTY, INDIANA,  
ON THE LETTERHEAD OF FORT  
WAYNE CHAPTER, ORDER OF  
DEMOLAY

Allen County Public Library  
900 Webster Street  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46801-2270



## FORT WAYNE CHAPTER

## Order of BeMolay

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

(1)

Adelany Council  
 HARLEY SOMERS, Chairman  
 W. E. NEUENSCHWANDER  
 W. J. ADAMS  
 F. H. POCOCK  
 BROWN COOPER  
 BYRON SOMERS  
 WILLIAM C. GEAKE  
 EPH. P. DAILEY

Meets on Second and Fourth Friday  
 Nights of Each Month at  
 Harmony I. O. O. F. Hall

## The first record of the name Poe or Poughkeepsie

A petition was presented to the County Commissioners Jan. 6, 1839 by John Snider and others praying for a change in the State Road leading from Fort Wayne to Richmond and known as the Winchester Road commencing at or near Mosquito Creek (Lipse Creek) thence by way of the village of Poughkeepsie to a bridge across the run near the residence of John Snider known as (See Creek). The name Poughkeepsie undoubtedly came from the town of the same name in New York. The village was known as Poughkeepsie until it was platted by William Essig and he named his platt Williamsport. The name Poughkeepsie was almost forgotten for many years. The first Post office was known as William town in Indiana in the western part of the State by the same name. In the latter part of the 70's the Post Office Department demanded a new name for the Post Office and it was at this time that some thoughtful citizen abbreviated Poughkeepsie to "Poe" and that has been known by that name ever since.

## WILLIAMSPORT PLATTED.

This village was platted Oct. 24, 1848 by William Essig. It is located in the Southwest Quarter Sec 29 Marion Township Allen County Indiana. It was laid out at a variation of 34 degrees east of a magnetic Meridian. The streets are 60 feet wide and cross each other at right angles. The alleys are 14 feet wide. The original plat contained 42 lots. The main street (Winchester Road) was called Cass Street. The street leading to the bridge was called Butler Street and the street running parallel south of Butler was called Fillmore Street. The river street was called Taylor Street. The first lot sold was Lot No 2 to Solomon Litchenwalter for 50%. The next Lot No 42 was sold to Charles Muldoon for \$12. The next year Mr Muldoon bought lots 35 and 39 for \$10 each. On Dec. 2, 1849 Mr. Essig sold to Samuel Lutz Lot No 3 for \$15 this is the lot where the brick store now stands. On Nov. 13, 1874 John Sargent platted 17 lots to the town of Williamsport and made an additional street which he named after his wife Charlotte Street.

CHURCHES

On May 15, 1851 sold lot No 23 to Mathias Beck and Hartman Schmitt Trustees of Zions Evangelical Luthern Church for \$1.00 thus the first church in the village was a Eutern Church. An interesting record in the deed which was made by Nelson McLain Justice of the Peace recited as follows;

Granted in trust for the use of German Luthern and German Reformed Evangelical Congregation known as Zion's Church to erect thereon a house to worship Almighty God for the members of said demoninat<sup>n</sup> of churches and none other, to preach and expound God's Holy Word therein so long as said congregation shall exist or worship in said place and to have and to hold said premises.

There was erected on this lot a log church which was used for many years for the congregation and many of the older citizens can well remember when the old log church still stood.





HARLEY SOMERS, "Dad"

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Nights of Each Month at  
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## FORT WAYNE CHAPTER

# Order of DeMolay

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

(2)

Advisory Council  
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The next church to be established in Poe was the Methodist Church Nov. 2, 1866. It is situated on lots 16 and 17 these lots were first owned by John Graft and then by John Neireiter who sold them for \$20. A frame church was constructed and was used until the present brick church was built.

Aug. 4, 1874 several of the citizens affiliated with the United Brethren Church purchased lots 29 and 30 and built a frame church in which they worshiped until 1897 when the congregation was disbanded and the Church Property was sold to Harvey Turner for the purpose of establishing the Christian Church.

### The Cemetery

The first record of the Poe Cemetery is Aug. 26, 1851 when Mr. Essig gave a deed to the trustees of the Lutheran Church Mathias Beck and Hartman Smith for the sum of \$5. This deed recited that the land shall be used for cemetery purposes except that the bodies of suicides and notorious blasphemers shall not be interred. This tract of the present cemetery lies north of the road passing through it. On June 6, 1859 John and Leliah Snider deeded the south part of the cemetery to William Long, Judge Vaughn and Lemuel Coverdale Trustees of Marion Township reserving a small tract for their own use.

### WILLIAMSFORT'S BRASS BAND

For many years this village supported a brass band. The band played at Picnics and Fourth of July Celebrations besides being called to Monroeville, Decatur, Ossian and Fort Wayne. Its members were Clark Lutz, Clay Harrod, Jim Deel, Marion Smith, Jacob Hart, William Loshire, William Lutz, Charles Lipse, Finley Beam, Clark Litchenwalter, Mills Harrod, William Litchenwalter, and Homer Brown.

### THE FIRST STORE

The first store was run by a man by the name of John Swell a German. It stood across the river on land now owned by Homer Brown. The first store the town proper was owned by a man by the name of John Gould. In 1870 Hiram True established the first real General Store and later added a drug store. John Brown had a store in Poe for many years and in 1890 together with the Masonic Lodge built the present brick store building. Other store keepers who have owned stores and operated them in Poe are Charles True, James Bell, Dr. Homer Brown.

### MILLS

The first saw mill was operated by William Essig on the Winchester Road where it crosses Misquito Creek or Lipse Creek. This was an upright saw mill and could only run in the spring when the water was high in Lipse Creek. This Mill was built in the early forties. About 1840 John Deeler a German bought 10 acres of land of Owen Owen just east of the mill.



## FORT WAYNE CHAPTER

## Order of DeMolay

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

(3)

## Advisory Council

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sold out to Charles Muldoon who built the old dyke from the bridge leading to the mill. Charles Muldoon continued to operate this mill until it burned down about the years 1857 or 1858. Then came Maurice Cody who had married Bridget Muldoon a sister of Charles. He raised the dam to some ten feet by first building cribs and then filled them with stone. Then placed long trees slantwise resting on the cribbing with their bases buried under heavy stone. He then proceeded to build a mill on the west side of the river. The mill had two large milling stones about 10 ft. across and one stone five feet wide. The mill was supplied with the best of silk bolting and the flour which came from the mill commanded the highest price in Fort Wayne and other markets. This mill flourished for about 25 years and until the steam rolling mills became plentiful. In 1882 agitation began for the destruction of the dam by residents up the river they petitioned the County Commissioners for relief claiming that in flood time it held the water back and in the summer time the water became stagnant. William Hildebrand had been the miller since the civil war. He lived in Poe and from his son Thomas Hildebrand much of this information was secured. In 1884 some one tried in daylight to dynamite the dam but did not do much damage. When this failed about twenty five men from up the river with picks and shovels attempted to tear it out. The Sheriff came and arrested one man and took him to Fort Wayne. After he left with his man those remaining again went to work but it was well built and it was almost impossible to remove the heavy stones. Some weeks later and at night it was finally blown. A large opening was made but at flood time this opening did very little to abate the flood waters and in the summer time the river still became stagnant. In 1896 when there was a March flood the old mill fell into the river and was washed down and salvaged by the residents down river. Samuel Luts and Solomon Litchensalter were the carpenters and when it was raised each of them took the end position on either side far above the water in placing the perline plate and outside rafters. It was raised by hand taking two weeks to do so. Men came to help for ten miles. One delegation of fifteen men came from Cassian.

HARLEY OF THE 1840s

This is most interesting after what has happened the last few days. Prior to 1846 there was no bridge across the river at Williamsport. The old ford across the river was about 200 feet below the present dam. It was here that the river was shallow for a part of the year and the banks were low on both sides. It could be forced on horse back and if the water not too high by wagons. In 1846 the following residents petitioned the County Commissioners for a bridge, Charles Muldoon, Benjamin Nickerson, Bernard Muldoon, Andrew Lipse, Christopher Lipse, William Somers, John Seider, Patrick Hart, Henry Muldoon and Hesse Heaton. It was built by Nelson McLain and Charles Muldoon at a cost of \$400. It only lasted two years when ice took it away. The town was without a bridge for two years. In 1857 this bridge was partly washed out and \$700 was spent fixing it. Then in 1867 came the old wooden bridge as many here can still remember it was 150 feet long and 16 feet wide. It was a good bridge and lasted until March 1886 when



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Harmony I. O. O. F. Hall

FORT WAYNE CHAPTER  
**Order of Testimony**  
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA  
(4)

Advisory Council  
HARLEY SOMERS, Chairman  
W. E. NEUENSCHWANDER  
W. J. ADAMS  
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EPII. P. DAILEY

and I had been to Fort Wayne. On our way home we stopped in the bridge for shelter from the rain and wind. Then the wind became so strong we considered it unsafe and started to drive out when we were fifteen feet off the bridge the wind swept the bridge into the river. It broke in the middle and fell which scared the horses. They upset the wagon leaving Lipse and his father under the wagon box. The father said we are killed. The team ran home just north of town scaring Mrs. Lipse. Our barn was blown down as were many other buildings in town. This wooden bridge cost \$8,000. Then in 1886 and 1887 the iron bridge was built. Thus the bridge that now lies in the river has served this Community for 60 years.

After 100 years this village continues to be a good place to live a good community in which to live. It has indeed been a pleasure to present these few facts about Poe and some of the pioneers who lived here nearly 200 years ago. They are taken from records in the Court House in Fort Wayne and a few from those who actually participated in them.











